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SUBJECT: USUNESCO: MEETING ON CULTURAL DIVERSITY WITH UK
AMBASSADOR AND EU OBSERVER

11. UK ambassador to UNESCO (and EU president) Tim Craddock and Michel Vanden Abeele, the head of the EC observer mission, requested a meeting with Ambassador Oliver on July 122. Craddock came with a message that 99 percent of the EU countries' agenda at UNESCO, especially in areas like education and science, is the same as that of the US. He also expressed hope that the divergence of views on the cultural diversity convention would not have repercussions. He added that despite a wide range of national positions among EU countries, all EU members have examined the draft convention and found it acceptable. (Note: actually two central European countries have told us they hate the convention but their hands are tied). The EU does not want the convention reopened and expects it to be adopted at the General Conference in October

12. In response to a question about Washington's reaction, Ambassador Oliver told Craddock that Washington was concerned by the tone of the last negotiation. She pointed out that the US went out of its way to be collegial but collegiality and a search for consensus were totally lacking during the last negotiating session. Ambassador Oliver also indicated that she did not know yet to what degree this will affect our re-engagement with UNESCO. When Craddock remarked that the situation was not good, she responded that it is serious.

13. Craddock suggested that Department lawyers speak to lawyers from EU members states and from the Commission so that we can better understand why the EU members can live with the draft. He emphasized that this would not be a negotiation, simply an exchange of views, because the member states did not want to reopen the convention.

14. Craddock also said something that was interesting. He said, "One international organization does not have a remit for everything in trade. It does not matter if there's overlap (of competencies) in such a broad convention." (Comment: We are really surprised that Craddock took such a casual view of WTO competencies and about the disturbing tendency for UNESCO to insert itself in the areas of competency of other international organizations.) Craddock also mentioned that the EU were quite pleased that the convention would funnel more assistance to Africa, though he did not have an answer when we asked him how it would help Africa. (Note: in a conversation the previous day an African delegate told the DCM that Africa got nothing out of the convention; the only winners were "northern" countries.)

15. Comment. Craddock and the EC observer were quick to try to put some of the blame for the outcome of the negotiations on the US, but we pointed out that neither had spent much time in the room and knew how hostile things really were. While we do not think that the EU countries are going to back down, we take this meeting as a sign that they are worried that they may have pushed the US too far. They are also anxious to continue working with the US on the important parts of UNESCO's agenda, such as education. Since the EU does not want to reopen negotiations, we are wary about holding consultations on the draft convention. Still, in the unlikely event, the EU could be budged, we would suggest a meeting of lawyers, including Geneva Legal Adviser Peay, here in Paris. We know that Japan would also be interested in attending such a meeting.

OLIVER